SIX POLITICAL PRISONERS ARRAIGNED IN D.C.

MAJOR CONSPIRACY TRIAL AHEAD

On May 25, 1988, Laura Whitehorn, Marilyn Buck, Linda Evans, Susan Rosenberg, Tim Blunk and Alan Berkman were arraigned in D.C. Federal Courthouse for conspiracy to "oppose, obstruct or change the foreign and domestic policies of the U.S. Government through violent and illegal means." It was clear in the arraignment before Judge Harold Greene that the government will relentlessly pursue and punish people who refuse to go along with U.S. violations of human rights. The Justice Department and the FBI are making an example of this case to show what the government will do if you dare to oppose it. The defendants are kept separated from spectators by a thick plexiglass barrier; the security forces are massive in the courtroom; the defendents are held under intolerable conditions. This display of power is meant to intimidate people and put an end to serious dissent in this country.

The women and men on trial are loved and respected by those who have known and worked with them. For over 20 years they have participated in movements for social change and justice. They are a few among the many of the world's decent people, who resist rather than stand by and tolerate injustice, racism and genocide. They became targets of the U.S. Government and were jailed for their actions and convictions over 3 years ago. For these reasons they are political prisoners. Most are already serving repressively harsh sentences of over 40 years, isolated in special control units such as the Lexington women's control unit and the infamous Marion Federal Peniteniary. The U.S. denies that it has a single political prisoner. This is a lie. There are over 200 in U.S. prisons. This is a political case brought by the corrupt Meese Justice Department for political reasons.

During 1982-1985, there was a period of active resistance from several clandestine organizations. The slogan, "Build a revolutionary resistance movement," was raised by groups such as the Armed Resistance Unit, the Red Guerrilla Resistance and the United Freedom Front in communiques claiming responsibility for attacks against U.S. military/corporate/government institutions responsible for war and aggression. The attacks were bombings, carried out during the night with warning calls, so that no one was injured. The communiques urged growing numbers of people to intervene and disrupt the U.S. war machine by varied and creative ways. They argued that this is an important expression of solidarity with the nations and peoples under attack by the U.S, such as the people of South Africa, Central America, Puerto Rico, Grenada, Palestine and Black/New Afrikan people within the U.S. itself.

The women and men under indictment are accused of functioning underground and carrying out some of these actions, including the bombing of the Capitol in 1983 after the U.S. invaded Grenada. At the arraignment they stated that they were anti-imperialist political prisoners and were guilty of no crimes.

The trial will take place in the same courthouse where Oliver North will face trial. The difference is staggering in how the government deals with those responsible for carrying out its oppressive policies versus those who resist them! Oliver North implemented the 'foreign and domestic policies of the U.S. Government through violent and illegal means.' His operations were funded not only by illegal arms sales, but by the deadly traffic of cocaine and crack in our communities. Oliver North is called a hero. These defendents are labeled terrorists, and are held under the following conditions:

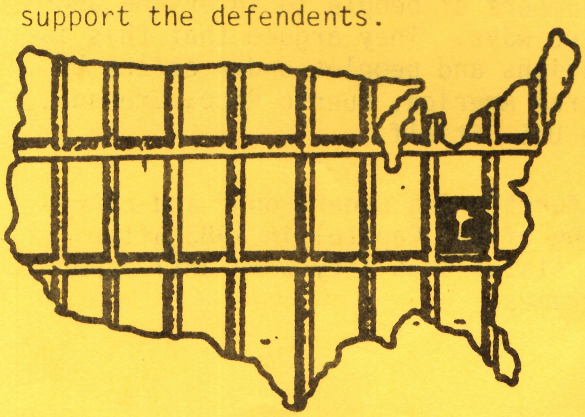
* The prison, D.C.Jail, at the direction of the Justice Department, has severely limited their access to lawyers and paralegals.
* The six are prohibited from meeting together, with or without lawyers, even though they are co-defendents in this complex conspiracy case.
* During all legal meetings, they are forced to wear both handcuffs and leg irons, which is painful and makes it impossible to write. They are denied use of the law library.
* Their living conditions violate every international standard for the treatment of prisoners: they are kept in strict solitary confinement for 71 out of 72 hours; they never get outside for fresh air; other prisoners are warned not to speak to them; they are shackled hands and feet whenever they leave the immediate vacinity of their cells; they are strip-searched after every visit. They have no contact visits with friends or family.

The government is doing this to break them and dehumanize them in the eyes of the people so that they are feared and hated. They hope that no one will care if their human rights are violated in this legal mockery of a trial or behind the prison walls.

Ronald Reagan went to the Moscow Summit to raise the issue of human rights violations everywhere around the world except in his own backyard. He wants to deny that there are political trials and political prisoners right here <u>because of</u> human rights violations. In Hartford, 15 Puerto Rican patriots are being prosecuted for conspiracy. What is at issue is the U.S. colonization of Puerto Rico. In Springfield, seven North-americans are being prosecuted for seditious conspiracy for similar charges as in this trial. What is at issue is the right to resist a government bent on war and the destruction of human rights. Those arrested in the course of pursuing their convictions have met with severe repression in the courts and in the prisons.

We urge you to give your support to these political prisoners and continue to demand justice. Some current ways to show support are:

* Write to the prisoners: D.C. Jail, 1901 D. St., S.E., Wash, D.C. 20003
* Sign mailing list to be contacted for letter or telegram campaigns if needed.
* Come to court dates to show support. (June 24th - next date)
* Send contributions to the Committee to Right Repression
* Ask for speakers, literature, videos to provide information to your political organization or your friends.
* Write articles for your publications.
* Send us ideas from your own experience about ways to fight the repression and support the defendents.



For more information write:

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